In the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) In a local area network comprising a plurality of terminals configured for running client applications and connecting to the Internet, each of said plurality of terminals having the ability to divide a request for information from a content server into a plurality of packets and to distribute the plurality of packets via the local area network, a method of sending data over a communications network, the method comprising the steps of

(a) ~~an originating terminal~~ generating a request for information from a content server coupled to a wide are network by an originating terminal, said originating terminal coupled by means of a local area network to each of said plurality of terminals;

(b) ~~the originating terminal~~ dividing the request for information from said content server into a plurality of packets by said originating terminal;

(c) the originating terminal distributing the plurality of packets between a first plurality of terminals in the local area network, each of said first plurality of terminals (110a, 110b, 110c and 110d) having an associated, ~~respective~~direct, wide area

network connection to the Internet, said associated, direct, wide area network connection to the Internet of a first one of said first plurality of terminals in the local area network different from an associated, direct, wide area network connection to the Internet of the remainder of said first plurality of terminals in the local area network, the plurality of packets being distributed to said first plurality of terminals over the local area network;

(d) each of said first plurality of terminals transmitting each of said first plurality of ~~transmitting~~ packets received during step (c) over its said associated, direct, wide area network connection to the Internet ~~over said associated wide area connection~~ to a reconstitution server coupled to~~located on~~ the Internet such that the originating terminal shares the bandwidth of the associated, different and direct wide area connections of said first plurality of terminals; ~~and~~

(e) the reconstitution server receiving the plurality of packets via a plurality of said associated, different and direct wide area connections, reconstituting the plurality of packets into said request for information from said content server, and sending the reconstituted plurality of packets to the content server.

2. (Currently Amended) ~~The~~A method according to claim 1, comprising the further steps of:

(f) the content server sending content data to the reconstitution server in response to the request received in step (e), the data being sent as a plurality of content data packets;

(g) the reconstitution server distributing the plurality of content data packets to the first plurality of terminals over the respective wide area connections;

(h) the first plurality of terminals sending the plurality of content data packets to the originating terminal; and

(i) the originating terminal receiving the plurality of content data packets to re-create the content data.

3. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The method according to claim 2, wherein in step (c) and/or step (g), the plurality of packets are distributed to the first plurality of terminals in a round-robin basis.

4. (Currently Amended 1) ~~A~~The method according to claim 3, wherein the round-robin distribution of the plurality of packets is weighted.

5. (Currently Amended) The~~A~~ method according to claim 4, whereon the round-robin weighting is determined in accordance with the bandwidth of the respective wide area connection between the terminal and the Internet.

6. (Currently Amended) A communications network comprising;

a plurality of terminals ~~each terminal configured~~ for running client applications and connecting to the Internet, each of the plurality of ~~the~~ terminals being connected to one another by a local area network, and at least some of said terminals having an ~~respective~~ associated, different and direct wide area connection to the Internet, said plurality of terminals each having the ability to divide a request into a plurality of packets and distribute the plurality of packets to other ones of said plurality of terminals via the local area network;

~~the Internet including~~ a reconstitution server, coupled to

the Internet and a plurality of content servers, wherein, in use, an originating terminal in the local area network generates a request for one of the content servers, divides the request into a plurality of packets and distributes the plurality of packets between a plurality of terminals via the local area network; ~~and~~

wherein each of said plurality of terminals ~~configured for~~ sends~~ing~~ packets received to the reconstitution server via ~~respective~~ each said at least some terminal's separate associated and direct wide area connections~~,~~ such that the originating terminal shares the bandwidth of the separate, associated and direct wide area connections of said at least some of said terminals and wherein the reconstitution server sends the plurality of packets to the content server.

7. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The communications network according to claim 6, wherein, in use,

the content server sends content data to the reconstitution server in the form of a plurality of content data packets,

the reconstitution server distributes the plurality of content data packets between the plurality of terminals over the respective associated, different and direct wide area connections,

the plurality of terminals route the plurality of content data packets to the originating terminal; and

the originating terminal receives the plurality of content data packets and re-creates the content data.

8. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The communications network according to claim 6, wherein one or more of said plurality of terminals has more than one respective wide area connection.

9. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The communications network according to claim 6, wherein the local area network comprises one or more terminals, further to said plurality of terminals, not having a wide area connection.

10. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The communications network according to claim 6, wherein each of the active terminals in the local area network comprises a list identifying the other active terminals.

11. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The communications network according to claim 10, wherein, in use, each active terminal periodically sends a first status message to the other terminals in the local area

network to indicate that it is active.

12. (Currently Amended) AThe communications network according to claim 10, wherein an active terminal sends a second status message to the other terminals in the local area network prior to becoming inactive.

13-15. (Cancelled)